4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FRS Ngoni FRS Mpezeni

brew beer when her husband asks her. In addition to this minimal amount of required co-operation, in many instances husband and wife have a great deal in common. They may go to church or visit a relative, or even go together to a beer party.

The obligation on a man to clothe his wife is the most clear-cut and obvious duty in marriage. It is the failure to clothe that is usually cited as evidence of desertion when a woman seeks a divorce. There is no specific standard to which he must clothe her, but she usually insists that she is not to be more poorly clad than are her neighbours. Clothes consisted in the old days of skins and barkcloth, but cloth was introduced by Arabs before the Europeans arrived, and was used as a form of currency by the early European settlers. A few people still wear skins, but only on top of Western clothing. There is no indigenous weaving, and all clothes have therefore to be bought in the shops.

The man takes the initiative in finding a hut in which he and his wife live, and it is he who undertakes the major work of repair. Houses, if made of bamboo, last for about twenty years, but require rethatching, while pole and mud huts last about eight years only. When a couple begin to live together they usually borrow an empty hut in the village, asking the man or woman who is looking after the hut if they can move in. No charge can be made for the loan of a hut. If the marriage begins uxorilocally, and the woman has previously been living in a dormitory, she may ask the other girls in the dormitory to go and sleep elsewhere until her husband can build her a hut of her own. The man does the work of marking out the site, digging the foundations, cutting the trees for the framework, and so on. All these are men's jobs, and he may be assisted in the work by his male neighbours and relatives. His wife gathers thatching grass, but the men do the actual thatching. The finishing of the house is entirely the wife's work, and she usually gets her friends and relatives to help her plaster the walls and floor. The maintenance of the plaster remains her responsibility and she ought to renew the floor every month after she has menstruated.

Every wife ought to have her own garden, and, sooner or later, her own storehouse. Most young people acquire gardens of their own long before they marry, but continue to pool the produce of the garden with the adult responsible for feeding them. This arrangement continues after marriage, and the incoming spouse at first merely assists in the garden of the other and is fed from the common storehouse of his or her parents or relatives. If a woman has been living with her grandmother and her husband comes to live with her, the couple draw on the wife's grandmother's storehouse for their food, and place the produce of the wife's garden in it. Similarly, in virilocal marriage, a woman may at first help in her husband's garden and draw from his mother's storehouse. But after a year or two, if a man is not to be despised as a sluggard, he must build a storehouse in the village where they have settled, and see that there is

4 Stanford D-S (ca. 1905) 1910 FFT Yao FFT
Ngoni F25
Maravi F24

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest.

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of native cured skin as a *finger supported by string round the waist.*[1] The same thing is worn after childbirth for six months. Angoni women always wear them.

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. *The Angoni chief* wears three cloth, blue, white and coloured, the last outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made cotton, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, whose skins were and are used as articles of clothing.

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (p.c.).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of native twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows.

Under the heading of dress must be included the head spoons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the home sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the foot with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the wounds only used to be worn; this is a small hard-shelled fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis.

Food, etc.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two final meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 4 p.m.; each consists of native porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *relish* (*ndiwo*) to which the nsi is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc.

The native is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden

[1] *Finger or relish*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

4: Stanmus D-5 (ca. 1995) 1910 FTT Yao ... Marav: FR9 Ngon: FR5

Mpiko, a basket-shaped vessel in which the relish is cooked (*d*).
Mkhoti, a small *Mpiko*, always kept by the side of the fire with warm water in it. With this the woman washes her husband after intercourse; she may use the same to wash herself, but more usually goes to the ordinary washing-place, a flowing stream.
Mbali, a dish (*c*).

Of other vessels may be mentioned a jug used by the Wakonga, the gourd ladle of universal use (*b*), and the large wooden mortar, 2 feet 6 inches high, with a pestle 3–4 inches in diameter, employed by all the tribes for pounding grain.

Winnowing is practised by the Angoni only.

Basketwork.—In former days mats were made of split reeds and baskets of bamboo; now the making of mats from palm-leaves has been learnt from coastal natives, and the Chipeta varieties of basket have been copied by other tribes. The following are the principal varieties of basket in use (Fig. 12):—

Nampan, a small tray, used for flour, beans, etc. (*e*).
Likhoro, a large tray, used as the *Nampan*.
Mkhongo, a circular pattern with a square base, for chowanga cobs (*f*).
Tumunda, a circular pattern with a wooden rim and cover, for cloths (*c*).
Chiwandi, a small watertight basket.
Sindi, a large basket, also watertight, for beer.

FIG. 13.

FIG. 14.

There is little ornamentation of the baskets except of the *tumunda*, the bent-wood edges of which have designs cut and burnt on them. Plaited grass bracelets are made, rough cages for carrying chickens, etc., are made from split bamboo (*Fig. 13*). A form of basketwork is used to make the *silolwe* or grain store. Fish traps of very complicated design are also constructed. Gourds of various kinds and sizes take partly the place of baskets.

String.—The bark of the *bwezi* tree is cut off and dried in the sun; it is then rolled between the hand and the thigh into string with no other treatment. The bark of the *lingo* tree is used to make string or *chingwe*; this tree is planted for that purpose. Rope is also made from the baobab tree. Plaited palm leaves, *nyumbulo*, are used for many purposes, and are stretched across the framework of the bed to support the mat.